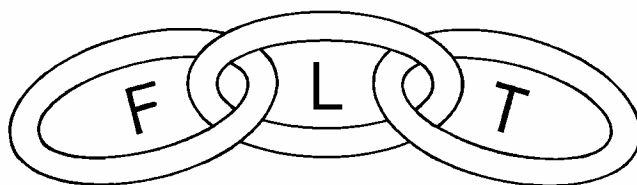


Manual of Instruction  
For  
Odd Fellows Lodges



## **Duties of the Warden and the Conductor Preliminary to Opening**

Prior to the opening of the lodge, the Warden, assisted by the Conductor, will see that the Lodge Room is properly prepared for the meeting.

Below is listed some of these duties:

1. Place officers' regalia at the proper stations.
2. Place members' regalia in a convenient place in the anteroom.
3. Place the visitors' register where it is conveniently accessible in the anteroom.
4. Have the flag unfurled and placed conveniently accessible in the anteroom for presentation.
5. See that the Charter is in the Lodge Room. *(For this purpose, the anteroom is part of the lodge room.)*
6. Place the Bible, closed, on the pedestal in front of the Chaplain.
7. Place the flag stand in a convenient place to the right of and in a line with the Noble Grand's pedestal so that the flag will not obstruct the view of officers.
8. Place the gavels on the pedestals at the Noble Grand's and Vice Grand's stations.
9. See that the chairs and pedestals are in their proper places at the officers' stations.
10. Place the Ode Cards at the Warden and Conductor stations for distribution at the time the password is taken.
11. When there is to be balloting, the ballot box shall be placed on the desk of the Secretary or other convenient place.

## OPENING CEREMONY

At the appointed hour (*Noble Grands are urged to open their lodges on time*) the Noble Grand will assume his/her station, clothe himself/herself in proper regalia, and after affording an opportunity for all to enter who are in waiting, will then proceed to business by giving one rap with the gavel for silence and order. Then, in a clear, distinct voice, will give to the officers and members the instructions prescribed in the Opening Ceremony. (*Instructions should be observed by the members in a decorous manner, with dignity and punctuality, and order should be immediately established in the lodge room.*) Then, the Noble Grand directs the Warden to examine all those present.

### Examination

When addressed by the Noble Grand, the Warden and Conductor will arise and face each other. (*The Noble Grand instructs them to examine those present.*) They will advance until they meet and face the Noble Grand; the Warden will then advance to the Noble Grand and receive the passwords. He/she will then return and receive the passwords from the Conductor. All officers and members will then rise without being called up. The Warden and the Conductor will then proceed to examine all those present, beginning with the supporters of the Noble Grand. The Warden will examine those on the right and the Conductor those on the left of the Noble Grand.

While conducting the examination of the members in the front row, the examining officer takes a position one pace in front of the person to be examined. That person steps over to the officer and communicates the passwords in accordance with instructions as given in the ritual. The member steps back and is seated. The examining officer will so proceed until all in the front row of the section have been examined. (*A section means those seated between the Treasurer and Chaplain and Secretary and Past Grand, and those between the Past Grand and Chaplain and rear of the hall.*)

When more than one row of seats in the section is occupied the examining officer will take a position at the end of the section, about one pace in front of the front row and face about. The members in the rows behind the front row will proceed in single file past the examining officer and communicate to him/her the passwords. They will continue in single file to the other end of the front row and around to their original seats. This process will be continued until the members in all back rows of seats have been examined. The officer reaching the inner door first will proceed to examine those in the anteroom where only the term password is required.

If there is a person present without the necessary passwords, the examining officer will report such person to the Noble Grand. If the person is a member of the home lodge, the Noble Grand shall either direct the person to advance to his/her station and receive the passwords or instruct the examining officer to “pass the brother/sister.” Should such person be a visitor from another lodge, the Noble Grand shall appoint a committee to retire with the visitor and ascertain their qualifications.

All present having been examined in the passwords, the Warden and Conductor assume a position side by side about two paces in front of the Vice Grand’s station, facing the Noble Grand, and the Conductor reports to the Warden the results of his/her examination of members. The Warden and Conductor right and left face and march, to a line in front of their stations, right and left face and proceed to their stations, where the Warden reports to the Noble Grand in accordance with ritualistic instructions. (*The Warden and Conductor will remain standing, facing each other.*)

### Presentation of the National Colors

(*If the flag should be presented at this time.*) A Flag Ceremony is a most fitting way to show our respect for the flag of our country. To provide uniformity in all lodges, the following ceremony has been adopted.

**Flag Ceremony – see Ritual – page 2**

**Noble Grand:** “The Warden and the Conductor will retire, present, and post the flag of our country.”

The Warden and the Conductor right and left face, then march directly from their stations to the center of the hall; execute simultaneously the left turn and the right turn and march toward each other until they meet; execute right turn and left turn toward the Vice Grand; march by two's until within about three paces in front of the Vice Grand's station, then execute two's right or two's left, as the case may be, and march through the inner door and into the ante-room.

The Inside Guardian will rise when the Warden and the Conductor face the Vice Grand's station, and as they approach his/her station, he/she will open the door or doors and immediately return to his/her station. *(If the door does not open wide enough to permit retiring or re-entering two abreast, the Warden will proceed first.)* After the Warden and the Conductor have retired, the Inside Guardian will close the door, return to his/her station, and report to the Noble Grand.

*(The Warden and the Conductor will get the Flag and prepare to re-enter the lodge room. The Warden, on the right, will carry the Flag. The Flag unfurled is carried on the right side at an angle of about ten degrees from the perpendicular. The staff is gripped between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, the right arm extended downward at full length. The staff is also gripped by the left hand with the left forearm reaching at right angles across the chest. If it is necessary to tilt the Flag when passing through the doorway, the left forearm will be placed around the unfurled Flag so that the tilted Flag and staff will rest upon it. The Flag must never be permitted to touch the floor.)*

**Inside Guardian:** “Noble Grand, the Warden and the Conductor bearing the Flag of our Country are ready to enter.” *(Noble Grand calls up the Lodge.)*

**Noble Grand:** “Admit them.”

When the Noble Grand gives this direction, the Inside Guardian opens the door and then returns to his/her station. The Warden and the Conductor will re-enter with the Flag; the Outside Guardian will follow the Flag and stop in the doorway. If the anteroom is to the right of the Vice Grand's station, they will march directly up the side of the room, in front of the Chaplain's station, until they reach a line about two paces in front of the Conductor and Warden station; at which point they will do two's left and so proceed until the Conductor is in front of the left supporter of the Noble Grand, where the Conductor will stop, the Warden continues forward for one, two, or three paces, when the Warden will right face and, at the same time, the Conductor will right face. The Warden will continue forward to one-half step beyond the receptacle, left face, and take the necessary steps and halt directly behind the receptacle, left face, and place the Flag in the receptacle, take one short step backward.

**Warden** will then announce: “Noble Grand, your orders have been obeyed.” *(US: At this time the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag is led by the Warden.)* The National Anthem may be sung.

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The Warden will then retrace his/her steps, returning to and in line with the Conductor, turn back to back, and they will march to their stations and about face. The Noble Grand will seat the Lodge, the Outside Guardian will resume his/her station, and the Inside Guardian will then close the door.

*(Should the door be to the left of the Vice Grand's station, the Warden and the Conductor enter and proceed to a line about three paces in front of the Vice Grand's station, execute two's right march to the side of the room, execute two's left, then proceed as above.)*

Opening Ceremony – *Continued*

After the flag has been presented, the Noble Grand will proceed with the opening ceremony as provided in the ritual. In this ceremony the two Scene Supporters will rise with the Warden. All other officers will rise when called upon. *(Delivery of the charges in the Opening Ceremony from memory as required by our laws.)*

When the Noble Grand declares the Lodge open by giving one rap of the gavel, the Vice Grand will also give one rap of the gavel.

## **Order of Business**

The Order of Business published in the Odd Fellows Lodge Constitution follows the usual parliamentary procedure and will be found a convenient and reliable guide. Where a particular item does not apply at that particular meeting, it should be passed; for example: the item calling for the reports of the Secretary and Treasurer at the close of each term should be used only at the meeting on which these reports are to be made. If at any time, during the meeting conditions arise referring back to or deferring until later any particular division or item in the Order of Business, the Noble Grand in his/her discretion or the lodge in its discretion may do so.

**1. Roll Call of Officers:** An officer's record of attendance is a very important part of the lodge records and should be accurately kept in the Roll Call book. Should an officer come in after the Roll is called, the record should be corrected to show him/her present but tardy. *(An officer is not entitled to the honors of the office unless he/she has attended a majority of the meetings of the lodge during the term of office.)*

**2. Introduction of Visiting Members:** This item is logically divided into three parts and it will be found much easier to conduct when followed in this manner:

### **First: The reception of visitors from other jurisdictions.**

If the visitor presents his/her card before the Lodge opens, the Noble Grand may at that time appoint an examining committee and have the visitor examined before Lodge is opened. If the visitor is found to be correct, the Noble Grand shall permit him/her to sit in Lodge during the opening ceremony and the committee will formally present the visitor to the Lodge. If the card is presented after the Lodge is opened, the Noble Grand will appoint a committee of three members to examine the brother/sister. The Vice Grand, Noble Grand or Past Grand, in possession of the annual traveling password must be one of the committee. The committee will retire to the anteroom and examine the visitor. *(See pages \_\_\_\_\_ of the Ritual.)*

If he/she is found correct the committee will conduct him/her into the Lodge and present him/her.

The chairman of the committee should first greet the visitor and introduce himself/herself; he/she should then introduce the other members of the committee. After the greeting, the committee should proceed with the examination as provided in the ritual. It is important that the committee shall be satisfied beyond any doubt that the visitor is entitled to sit in the Lodge. However, the committee should bear in mind that our laws and regulations are intended to protect the Order against imposters, but not to work a hardship on a member and deprive him/her of his/her privilege of visiting lodges. The spirit of the law, rather than the letter, should be the guiding factor.

### **Second: The reception of visiting Grand Officers.** *(See page \_\_\_\_ of the Ritual.)*

The Noble Grand should inform himself/herself before he/she opens the Lodge of the presence of Grand Officers or Past Grand Officers. He/she should personally greet them, ascertain their names and titles, and arrange to have them presented to the Lodge. Only the Elective Officers of Grand Bodies, when visiting a Lodge are entitled to the Honors of the Order. If there are two or more the Noble Grand will find it convenient and often times will save embarrassment by making a list of the names and their titles.

In presenting Grand Officers entitled to the Honors, it is well to ask all Grand Officers, Elective and Past-elective, of all branches of the Order to retire. They will retire in form, but not be accorded the Honors at this time as they are in preparation for the ceremony of presentation. The Noble Grand then appoints a committee to retire and present the Grand Officers. The committee retires in form. The Noble Grand may appoint one, two, or three on this committee. One seems to work more smoothly. The committee will announce to the Inside Guardian: "The committee with the Grand Officers." The Inside Guardian will inform the Vice Grand, who will report accordingly to the Noble Grand. The Noble Grand will direct, "Admit them," which will be repeated by the Vice Grand to the Inside Guardian. As the door is opened, the Noble Grand will call up the Lodge. The committee and Officers enter in form, the Chairman leading so that the introductions and presentations are made

from the right end of the line. The committee may present all of the Officers, or may present the first in line, and that Officer, in turn, presents the next, and so proceed until all have been presented. The Honors of the Order are extended; the Noble Grand welcomes them and asks the committee to present them to his/her station. He/she steps down, greets each of them, and directs them to seats on his/her right.

The Grand Master may be presented alone following other officers entitled to the Honors and if the Grand Marshal is present, it is his/her privilege to present the Grand Master.

District Deputy Grand Masters may receive the Honors of the Order only in the lodges in which they have been commissioned, and only when presenting their commissions for the first time and when installing officers of the lodges in their district.

Appointive Grand Officers and visitors may be presented from the center of the floor, by a committee, or by the Noble Grand from where they are seated.

Should a Grand Officer of another jurisdiction be a visitor at your Lodge, he/she is entitled to the same courtesies and honors due the Grand Officers of our own jurisdiction.

The Honors of the Order are also given on the retiring of an Officer entitled to them after he/she has addressed the chair, and it is not his privilege to decline them.

The Honors of the Order are to be given only when the Lodge is open in the initiatory degree.

Officers may also wait in the Anteroom during the Opening Ceremony. The Noble Grand would know that there are visitors in the Anteroom when the Outside Guardian does not enter at the conclusion of the Opening Ceremony. Also, Officers entitled to the Honors arriving late would be accorded the Honors upon entering the Lodge without the process of working in, being seated and then being escorted back to the center of the floor. Remember that when working your way into the Lodge that you give your name, your Lodge name and number and your rank, this is all passed on to the Noble Grand who would in turn appoints a committee to make the appropriate presentation.

### **Third: Reception of other visitors from this Jurisdiction.**

If time at all permits, all visiting brothers and sisters should be acknowledged and welcomed by the Noble Grand and all the members should join in making them feel at home. The Noble Grand can ask each to stand and give his/her name and Lodge, or appoint a brother/sister to introduce them to the Lodge, giving their names and the Lodge they are from, after which the Noble Grand should welcome them; or, if there is quite a group from the same Lodge, the Noble Grand can ask one of their number whom he/she may know to act as spokesman and introduce each of the group. Remember, it is the best of manners to see that all visitors are introduced, kindly welcomed and made to feel at home, and that they have an opportunity to sign the visitors' register. If time permits, ask them to address the Lodge and also see to it that they are asked to take part in games and recreation after the Lodge is closed.

Seats should be reserved on the front and right for visiting Grand Officers. The Grand Master, if present, is seated on the platform to the right of the Noble Grand. Other visiting officers are invited to occupy the reserved seats. A Grand Officer arriving late, after "working his/her way in," is invited to a reserved seat.

**Officers in Open Meetings.** At public meetings, exercise care not to bore the audience with too many introductions. In some cases it may be wise to introduce only Elective and Past-elective Officers. Further, it may be considered the best policy to introduce only the heads of each branch of the Order. The whole thing should be a matter for the good judgment and discretion of the Noble Grand or the presiding chairman.

When various branches of the Order are represented, the following is the rank of seniority: The Sovereign Grand Lodge, Grand Lodge, Grand Encampment, I.A.R.A., Rebekah Assembly, General Military Council, Department Council, I.A.L.A.P.M., Department Association, Grand Junior Lodge, and Theta Rho Assembly.

3. **Reading and Disposing of the Minutes.** Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of the minutes of a lodge meeting. The minutes or records of the, meeting of a lodge are the written and recorded history of that lodge. Hence, the Secretary should exercise greatest care in writing the minutes to see that they are a complete record of the transactions of the lodge meeting. Remember the minutes are being written for the possible use of posterity as well as the present members. The lodge may be holding a fifty or seventy-five or even hundredth anniversary and want a history of the period compiled. The minutes are the only authentic record for such a purpose.

The reading of the minutes of a meeting is for the purpose of informing the members present of the transactions as recorded and affords them an opportunity to correct any errors or omissions that may appear. Hence, the minutes should be read in a loud, clear voice so that every member present may hear them. The members should exercise their right and privilege to see that the records are complete and correct.

When there is a correction to be made it should be shown in the minutes of the current meeting and indicated by a note in the margin of the minutes that were corrected. **Erasures should never be made in the Lodge Minutes.**

4. (A) **Consideration of Previous Proposals for Membership or Reinstatement.**

*(This Heading need not be announced unless there are previous applications pending before the Lodge. The Noble Grand should ascertain before Lodge is opened if there are any such applications.)*

(B) **Reports of Interviewing Committees:** The interviewing of candidates for membership is a special trust reposed in the committee by its lodge. The obligation and responsibility of that trust should impel the committee to make a careful and thorough investigation. In making its report the committee should always be candid and impartial, having only in mind the highest and best welfare of its lodge and our Order. A high standard of quality should never be sacrificed. Good moral character and integrity are fundamental qualifications of a true Odd Fellow. The committee should have the moral courage to be true to its trust.

(C) **Application for Degrees:** A brother/sister having been initiated is eligible to apply for additional degrees. Payment of the degree fee to the Secretary is sufficient application to the Lodge, he/she must be examined as to his/her knowledge and proficiency in the preceding degree, by the officiating Noble Grand or by a brother/sister appointed by him/her. The examination must be conducted in the highest degree the candidate has received. If the examination has been satisfactory the next degree may be conferred.

(D) **Balloting for Admission:** If there are no applications to be voted upon, this item may be passed without reference. If there is an application to be voted upon, the Noble Grand so announces and directs the Warden to prepare the ballot. Voting on an application for membership must be by a secret ballot. *(For the purpose of voting, black cubes are considered as black ball ballots.)* The Noble Grand is charged with the supervision of the balloting and must see that its secrecy is maintained inviolate. The Outside Guardian is to be in the anteroom during the Balloting Ceremony.

The Noble Grand directs, "Warden, prepare the ballot." The Warden and Conductor rise simultaneously. The Warden secures the ballot box, which should have been placed on the Secretary's desk or some other convenient place. *(If there is no pedestal or altar in the center of the room, the Conductor will proceed to the Past Grand's station and remove the pedestal and place it in the proper position for balloting and return to his/her station.)* The Warden examines the ballot box to see that all the ballots are in the proper compartment for balloting. He/she then tenders it to the Noble Grand who will inspect it and verify that the ballot is properly prepared and returns it to the Warden.

The Conductor then steps up beside the Warden, they both execute the about face and march to the center of the room. The Warden places the ballot box conveniently on a pedestal or altar in the center of the room.

The Conductor and Warden will then step three paces from the pedestal toward the Vice Grand, face each other, step back a half pace and wait for the balloting to proceed.

The Noble Grand will then make the following announcement: "Brothers and Sisters, you are about to ballot on the application of Mr./Mrs./Ms. *[state first and last name]* for admission to membership by *[here state whether by initiation, by transfer, by reinstatement, etc.]* The report of the committee is *[favorable or*

*unfavorable*]. Remember that a majority of white balls elect. Let your decision be free from prejudice or personal bias, and vote for the good of your Lodge and Order.

He/she will then call up the lodge. (*If visitors are present he should state, "Visitors need not respond to the gavel."*) He/She will then say, "We will proceed to ballot."

The membership will then proceed as follows: the right and left supporters of the Noble Grand will lead the columns down the right and left sides of the hall, respectively. The secretaries and treasurer "fall in" behind them and the next member will "fall in," in turn, as the end of the column passes him/her and march toward the back of the hall. Here they will execute the left and right turn, march to a junction in front of the Vice Grand and, led by the right supporter to the Noble Grand, form in a single column toward the ballot box and halt at the point where the Warden and Conductor stand. The Warden and Conductor will allow only one member at a time to advance to the ballot box.

As soon as a member has cast his/her ballot, he/she will proceed to the right or left and return to his/her seat. The Warden and Conductor will then permit the next member to proceed. The balloting will so proceed until all the members in the column have balloted. When the Inside Guardian has voted and returned to his/her station, he/she will assume the duties of the Outside Guardian and permit that officer to enter the lodge room. The Noble Grand will then inform the Outside Guardian of the name of the applicant upon whom the lodge is balloting and that officer will then proceed to the ballot box, cast his/her ballot and then return to his/her station. The Conductor will then advance to the ballot box, cast his/her ballot, and return to his/her post. In like manner he/she will be followed by the Warden. The Vice Grand will then proceed to the ballot box and cast his/her ballot and return to his/her station. The Noble Grand will then leave his/her station and proceed to the ballot box and cast the final ballot. Then, returning to his/her station, the Noble Grand declares the ballot closed and seats the lodge.

The Warden and the Conductor then step together, execute the left face and right face and proceed to the pedestal; there the Warden closes the ballot box and, carrying it in full view, they execute the about face and proceed to the station of the Vice Grand. The Warden hands the ballot box to the Vice Grand with the handle forward. The Vice Grand accepts the box, at which time the Warden and the Conductor execute the about face so that their backs will be toward the Vice Grand while he/she inspects the ballot.

The Vice Grand, having inspected the ballot, closes the ballot box; then (*in a low voice*) says, "Warden." The Warden executes the about face and the Vice Grand hands him/her the ballot box with the handle forward. The Warden accepts the ballot box and executes the about face; then he/she and the Conductor proceed to the station of the Noble Grand, carrying the ballot box in full view. The Warden will hand the ballot box to the Noble Grand, handle forward, which the Noble Grand will accept. The Warden and the Conductor will execute the about face so that their backs will be toward the Noble Grand.

To verify the ballot and guard against mistakes and errors, the Noble Grand, before inquiring of the Vice Grand as to the condition of the ballot or announcing the results, may immediately call for a second ballot. If there appears to be no mistakes or errors the Noble Grand, after inspecting it, will ask, "Vice Grand, how did you find the ballot." The Vice Grand reports his/her findings to the Noble Grand by answering "favorable" or "unfavorable," as he/she finds it. The Noble Grand then announces the results, merely stating that the candidate has been elected or rejected.

He/she then destroys the ballot and says, "Warden," and the Warden executes the about face and the Noble Grand hands the ballot box to him/her handle forward. The Warden accepts the box and executes the about face and then he/she and the Conductor proceed forward until in line with their stations, they execute the right turn and left turn and proceed to their stations. The Warden deposits the ballot box in a convenient place; the Conductor will replace the pedestal in its place and both will then be seated.

If there is more than one application before the lodge for consideration, a collective ballot may be taken. In the case of a collective ballot being unfavorable, the Lodge will proceed to ballot on the applications singly as provided by law.

(E) **Initiation and Conferring of Degrees.** The first impressions made upon a candidate are the most lasting. Hence, the ceremonies of initiation and conferring degrees should always be performed in an efficient, solemn and dignified manner. Pranks or horseplay of any kind must never mar the profound solemnity of these ceremonies.

*(In Schools of Instruction the Instructor will make a review of the signs and passwords.)*

5. (A) **Does any Member know of a Brother or Sister who is sick or in Distress?**

This item, of course, is based upon one of the well-recognized and established missions of Odd Fellowship: “To visit the sick and relieve the distressed.” However, we should be sure that the brother/sister is sick before reporting it to the lodge.

It often happens that the visiting committees call and find the member’s ailment was only a slight indisposition for a day or two and from which he/she had fully recovered several days before the report was actually made to the lodge. Such experiences have the tendency to make the committee members become indifferent to cases when reported. The member should contact the brother/sister or his/her family either by phone or in person that day before reporting to the lodge. No sick brother/sister should be overlooked, but at the same time, let us avoid – as far as possible – sending the visiting committee on a “wild goose chase.”

The matter of “distress of a member” should always have careful and serious consideration. Too often we are prone to think only of material distress. Distress can be mental as well as material, and often times mental distress is more depressing and discouraging. Our mission should be to relieve distress wherever found and of whatever nature. Words of encouragement and good cheer mean as much – sometimes more – to one in mental distress, as does financial assistance to one in material distress.

(B) **Does any Member know of a Brother or Sister who is out of employment?**

In these days of manifold opportunities for employment, the asking of this question could become mechanical. To avoid this situation, the Noble Grand might well pass this item except when he/she has been advised that a certain brother/sister is out of employment. Then, in order to make it fully impressive on the members, the Noble Grand might say something like this, “Brother/Sister ..... is reported out of work. He/she is qualified to *(describe the class of work or kind of job or jobs the brother/sister is qualified to do)*. If any of you know or hear of a job where this brother/sister will fit in, I wish you would let him/her or someone on the visiting committee know about it.” If handled in some such manner, it will be sure to attract attention and set the members to thinking.

(C) **Does any member know of a vacancy where a Member might obtain employment?**

This item might well be treated in the same manner and in conjunction with the item just considered above. However, it cannot be too strongly stressed that the Noble Grand and his/her visiting committee as well as the membership at large should always be on the alert for cases of unemployment among the members of the Lodge.

6. **Communication and Disposition of the Same.**

The Noble Grand should acquaint himself/herself with all communications that have been received by the Secretary before he/she opens the Lodge. In this way he/she is prepared to know what action to take when the communications are read. It is the duty of the Secretary to make all communications available to the Noble Grand.

All legitimate communications should be read in full by the Secretary in such a manner that all members present might hear and understand them.

A communication circularizing lodges or members is not a legitimate communication and must not be read unless it has been authorized by the Grand Master. A lodge or group of lodges, an individual member or a group of members or organizations are not permitted to circularize the lodges or members without permission of the Grand Master. Circular letters from lodges or organizations of other jurisdictions are not legitimate unless properly approved by the Grand Master. A communication from an authorized organization, such as a district to its member lodges when it pertains to the work of the organization, is a legitimate communication. Also, circular letters from recognized civic organizations, such as the Red Cross, with which the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master has endorsed co-operation, are legitimate communications.

(A) **From the Grand Lodge.** Any communications from the Grand Lodge or Grand Lodge Officers are official and authorized communications and must be read. The Secretary has no authority to withhold the reading of such communications. Communications from the Grand Master should be received and considered with the highest respect.

Any action he requests or requires of the Lodge should be considered and disposed of at the time the communication is read, unless for some special reason it could be more effectively and advantageously considered at a later hour. But under no consideration should the Lodge fail to act on such requests or suggestions.

(B) **From other Lodges.** This means authorized communications from other subordinate organizations of all branches of the Order within our own or other jurisdictions.

(C) **From Persons.** These communications should be received and accorded courteous and proper consideration when they treat of matters specifically concerning the Lodge.

(D) **Bills against the Lodge.** All bills should be carefully checked and audited by the finance committee or some authorized committee or group before being acted upon by them Lodge.

## 7. **Reports of Offices and Committees.**

(A) **Of Treasurer** (*first meeting in each month*). Since the Treasurer presents his/her regular report only once a month, at the first meeting, this item should be passed on all other meetings. The phrase "first meeting in each month" is merely explanatory and should not be read. The Treasurer's monthly report is a vital part of the records of the Lodge and must be entered in full in the minutes of the meeting. The Treasurer is the custodian of all the fiscal assets, including all monies, stocks, bonds, notes or other fiscal securities belonging to the Lodge. His/her monthly report must include an accounting to the Lodge on all fiscal assets in his/her custody.

(B) **Of Secretary and Treasurer** (*at the close of the term*). The same practice should be followed as was in the item above. These are the reports submitted to the Grand Lodge; hence it is imperative that they be made out promptly after the close of the term, submitted to the Lodge for approval and forwarded immediately to the Grand Secretary together with the remittance of the Lodge's tax for the term. It is the duty of the lodge deputy to see that these matters are properly and promptly attended to, before installing the officers or communicating the password.

(C) **Of Trustees.** The Trustees are the custodians of the Lodge property and should make reports to the Lodge on the condition of same. It is the duty of the Trustees to see that the Treasurer and other fiscal officers are properly bonded, and they are the custodians of the bonds of the officers.

The Trustees are not fiscal officers of the Lodge. Hence, any monies received by them for rents or otherwise must be paid over to the Financial Secretary promptly, taking his receipt for same. The Trustees shall pay no bills out of receipts. All bills or other financial obligations should be submitted to the Lodge and paid through vouchers drawn on the Treasurer by order of the Lodge.

It is also the duty of the Trustees to see that the property of the Lodge, both real and chattel, is properly and adequately insured.

The state law incorporating our Order requires that five trustees be elected annually and the Secretary must record their names immediately after their election in the office of the County Recorder. This is an important legal matter and the Noble Grand must see that it is promptly done.

(D) **Of the Visiting Committee.** The function of this committee is one of the most important in the work of the Lodge. Its importance should always be kept before the Lodge and it must report, at ever, regular meeting of the Lodge.

We again call attention that the functions of this committee are not confined to visiting the sick. Its function is to visit any member who may be in distress, and it could well extend its work to an occasional visit to non-attending members. Such visits would mean much in stimulating interest in attending lodge meetings, building up membership and eliminating D.N.P.D.

The membership at large are reminded that the existence of a Visiting Committee does not relieve them of their duty as Odd Fellows to visit the sick and distressed. Attention is called to the fact that the name is “The Visiting Committee” and **NOT** “The Sick Committee.”

**(E) Of the Finance Committee.** The Finance Committee is required by the laws of the Order to audit the books of the Secretaries and Treasurer at the close of each term.

These audits should be carefully and thoroughly made. This duty and responsibility is an obligation and trust, which the Lodge has delegated to the Finance Committee. The paramount consideration that should govern the actions and work of this committee is the highest protection to the funds of the Lodge. An honest man welcomes having his/her books carefully checked. If an officer resents a careful audit, that is just all the more reason why it should be made.

The practice of the Lodge should be to have all bills presented to the Lodge carefully checked, audited, and approved by the Finance Committee before being acted upon by the Lodge. The Finance Committee should recognize and know that this is a very important responsibility to be discharged in such a manner as to insure the greatest protection to the funds of the Lodge, and at the same time, protect the rights and interests of any creditor of the Lodge, in case an error has been made prejudicial to his/her just rights. This committee should never permit itself to discharge this responsibility in a perfunctory, mechanical manner.

Reports of trustees and committees, both standing and special, which involve receipts and disbursements of money, should be carefully audited by the Finance Committee.

**(F) Of Standing Committees.**

**(G) Of Membership Committee.**

**(H) Of Public Relations Committee.**

**(I) Of Special Committees.** *(If there are no Special Committees this subhead need not be referred to.)*

## **8. Unfinished Business.**

**(A) Special Order of the Evening.** *(To be referred to only when some matters have laid over to be brought up at the specific meeting.)* This would include the reading, consideration, and voting on Amendments to by-laws, after the resolution for the proposed amendments had been introduced at a previous meeting under the Heading “Resolutions and Motions.”

**(B) Other Matters on Record.** *(To be referred to only when there are some unfinished matters pending but with no provision that they are considered at this specific meeting.)*

## **9. New Business.**

**(A) Proposals for Membership or Reinstatement.** *(To be referred to only when applications for membership have been presented.)* The Sovereign Grand Lodge has provided for five classes of membership; namely: Beneficial, Non-beneficial, Non-contributing, Life, and Associate. However, under our Odd Fellows Lodge Constitution applications for Beneficial Membership can no longer be accepted by Odd Fellows Lodges.

The Qualifications for each class should be clearly defined in the Odd Fellows Lodge Constitution, also see sections regarding Fees, and Dues. These qualifications should be carefully studied and clearly understood in order to avoid mistakes. In case of doubt, write the Grand Secretary for information.

*(In Schools of Instruction, the Instructor will explain the classes of membership and how each is acquired.)*

Below is enumerated the different ways for obtaining membership:

1. By Initiation.
2. By Reinstatement.
3. By Transfer.
4. By Un-expired withdrawal card or unexpired Grand Lodge Card.
5. By expired withdrawal card, defunct card, a dismissal card, or other evidence of former membership.

All applications for membership must be made in writing and signed in ink by the applicant.

When a Brother/Sister regains membership in the Order by an unexpired withdrawal card or an unexpired

Grand Lodge card, the continuity of his/her membership is not broken. In all other cases of re-entry into the Order the continuity of membership has been broken. Cards expire after one year from date of issue. Dropping for nonpayment of dues severs membership immediately upon being dropped.

The question of continuity of membership does not enter into admission by transfer, because membership has not been severed.

Dues must be paid to date of issue of a withdrawal card, or a certificate of resignation, or transfer certificate before a member is entitled to receive it.

Membership in a Lodge may be terminated by resignation, transfer, withdrawal, dropping for nonpayment of dues, expulsion, or death.

**(B) Appointment of Interviewing Committee.** *(This Sub-heading is to be referred to only when applications for membership have been presented.)*

**(C) Application for Cards, Dismissal Certificates or Certificates of Other Kinds.** *(To be referred to only when requests have been received.)*

Cards and certificates issued are: Withdrawal Card, Certificate of Resignation, Transfer Certificate, and Dismissal Certificate.

**(D) Resignation of Office or Membership.** *(To be referred to only when resignations have been submitted.)* Resignations are to be submitted in writing.

**(E) Nominations for Office.** *(To be referred to only when officers are to be nominated.)*

**(F) Elections.** *(To be referred to only when officers are elected.)* Under the Headings of Nominations and Elections the lodge members should give careful consideration to the selection of their officers. The growth and strength of a lodge depend largely on the quality of leadership shown by its officers. Oftentimes an excellent Outside Guardian is spoiled by electing him/her Vice Grand. He/she was well qualified for the first office, but lacking in qualifications for the second office.

**(G) Installation.** *(To be referred to only when there are officers to be installed.)* It is the duty and responsibility of the Lodge Deputy to have charge of the installations of the officers. The law requires certain qualifications be met before an officer is installed. The Lodge Deputy is required to examine an officer and know that he is qualified before he is installed. This is a very important duty and the Lodge Deputy should have the courage to discharge it.

**(H) Appointments.** *(To be referred to only when there are appointments to be made.)* The appointment of officers and committees is an important responsibility. In practically every instance the sitting Vice Grand is advanced to the office of Noble Grand. He/she should look well to his/her selections for appointive officers. Much of the success of his/her term will depend upon the loyalty and co-operation of his/her staff of appointive officers. He/she should be studying the qualifications of the members during his/her term so that he/she will be able to choose wisely.

In making appointments on committees, the Noble Grand should give careful attention to the qualifications of the member for the particular appointment he/she has in mind. The Noble Grand should also try to distribute his/her appointments among the membership and not be invariably giving them to the same few.

**10. Resolutions and Motions.** It is under this Heading that resolutions and motions pertaining to new business should be introduced. All motions or resolutions should be recorded in the Minutes. Hence, where it is possible they should be in writing.

Under this Heading, Resolutions of Respect are to be read, and also the Ceremony of Draping the Charter for a Deceased Brother or Sister is to be done at this time.

It is suggested that this Ceremony be observed on the First Meeting night of each month for all Brothers and Sisters who passed away during the preceding month. *(The Charter Draping Ceremony is found on the last page of this Manual.)*

## **11. Good of the Order.**

**(A) Has any Brother or Sister anything to offer for the Good of the Order?**

Under this heading, members should be encouraged and urged to offer any suggestions they may have that

would be for the good of the Lodge and for its welfare in general or that of the Order. Many a splendid idea or suggestion is absolutely lost just because the Brother or Sister kept it to himself/herself instead of passing it on to the Lodge. We would not have the steam engine if James Watt and others had kept their ideas to themselves. It is because Franklin, Edison, and others gave their ideas to the world that we have electricity today. We have Odd Fellowship in America today because Thomas Wildey gave expression to his ideas. Encourage members, if they have ideas, to pass them on. They do not have to make long speeches to do so. In fact, in many cases it is the member that does a lot of talking that has few suggestions to offer.

However, while members should always be encouraged to express their thoughts that are for the “Good of the Order,” the Noble Grand should never permit anything that is not for the Good of the Order. Criticisms that tend to bring into disrepute any organization or any branch of the Order, or a member of the Order must never be tolerated and it is the duty and responsibility of the Noble Grand to promptly call a brother or sister to order if he/she attempts it. Discussions that cause dissention and discord are barred by the laws of our Order.

(B) **Application for Benefits.** Under the law of our Order, benefits are not due unless applied for; that is, if the By-laws of the Lodge provide for the payment of sick benefits, a member who is sick is required to apply for them.

(C) **Are there any cases requiring the Charity of the Order?** Our Order is a charitable organization and a lodge should be ready to extend a helping hand within the limits of its ability, where charity deserves. The example of the Good Samaritan should be given practical application.

## 12. Announcements.

### (A) Of Special Meetings.

(B) Of Encampment Meetings\*, District Meetings\*, Rebekah Meetings\*, Canton Meetings\*, Committee Meetings\*, Anniversary Celebrations\*. (*\* In announcing these sub-head items, the Noble Grand should pause long enough between them to give a member time to arise and make the announcement.*)

13. **Of Receipts of the Evening.** (*To be given in detail by the Financial Secretary.*) This is a most important item of business and must be given in detail.

14. **Of Disbursements.** (*To be given in detail by the Secretary.*) Here again it is emphasized that the report must be in detail.

## 14. Closing the Lodge.

The same high standard of decorum and dignity that is enjoined for the opening ceremony should be observed in closing.

Instructions for the ceremony are found in the Ritual and should be faithfully observed.

## Flag Retiring Ceremony

The ceremony for retiring the Flag follows after the Inside Guardian has responded to the final instructions of the Noble Grand to him/her.

**Noble Grand:** “Warden and Conductor, you will retire with the Flag of our Country and deposit it for safe keeping.”

The Warden and the Conductor take two steps forward and face each other, march together; the Warden will then face the Noble Grand and proceed to the rear of the Flag, remove the Flag, left face and retrace the line of march to a line one pace in front of the Warden and Conductor’s station, right face and, at the same time, the Conductor will step up to the left side of the Warden. Both march to the side of the lodge room, execute two’s left (*the Inside Guardian opens the door and returns to his/her station*), march to the inner door and into the ante-room where the Flag is deposited. Should the anteroom be to the right of the Vice Grand’s station, the Warden and Conductor will execute two’s left at a line running about three paces in front of the Vice Grand’s station, march to the opposite side of the lodge room, execute the two’s right to the anteroom.

They then re-enter in two's, Conductor on the right (*the Inside Guardian closes the door and returns to his/her station*), and march to a line about three paces in front of the Vice Grand's station, execute two's right or two's left, march to a point in line with the Noble Grand's and Vice Grand's station; again execute two's right or two's left and march to the center of the room. They then turn back to back and march to a point in line with their stations, at which point they execute right face and left face and march to their stations and execute about face.

The Ceremony of Closing is then completed in accordance with ritualistic instructions. (*The Noble Grand declares the Lodge closed by giving one rap with the gavel, which is repeated by the Vice Grand.*)

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**This Manual of Instruction is to be used by the Deputy Grand Instructors in conducting Schools of Instruction.** It shall not be repealed, amended or added to except by Resolution presented to the Grand Lodge or a committee appointed by the Grand Master for revision.

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### Ceremony for Draping the Charter

**Note:** Each Lodge shall determine the place where the Charter shall be placed for the draping ceremony, where the Charter shall stay while draped, and how long it shall remain draped. (*The period used by many Lodges is thirty days.*)

At the time designated for the Draping of the Charter, the Noble Grand shall call up the Lodge and address the members as follows:

**Noble Grand:** “Brothers and Sisters of (**here state lodge name and number**), the angel of death has once more descended upon our beloved Order. This time the call has come for Brother(s) / Sister(s) [**name or names**], who [**was or were**] taken from our midst on [**date or dates**]. It is most fitting that we assembled here to pay tribute to [**his/her or their**] memory by the draping of our Charter. Our Warden and Conductor shall place the Charter of this Lodge in position for the draping ceremony and then receive the drape from the Noble Grand and place it upon our Charter.”

**Note:** As the Warden and Conductor start to carry out the instructions of the Noble Grand, appropriate music shall be played. The music shall continue until the Charter is draped. The music should become very soft as the drape is placed upon the Charter and stop completely when the Warden and Conductor step back from the Charter. When the Charter is draped the Warden and Conductor shall stand before the Charter in reverent attention.

**Noble Grand:** “Let us unite with our Chaplain in prayer.”

**Chaplain:** Almighty God, who makest no life in vain and who lovest all that Thou hast made, lift upon us the light of Thy countenance and give all Thy comfort. We pray Thou will keep in tender love the spirit of our departed brother/sister, whose life we shall hold in blessed memory. Help us who continue here to serve Thee with constancy, trusting in Thy promise of Eternal Life, that hereafter we may be united with our brothers in the glory everlasting. AMEN.

(*The Noble Grand seats the Lodge.*)

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## Ceremony for Undrapping the Charter

Where the titles of Noble Grand, Warden, Conductor and Chaplain are used in the Odd Fellows Lodge, the titles of Chief Patriarch, Junior Warden, Guide and High Priest shall be substituted in the Encampment.

**Noble Grand:** Warden and Conductor (*these officers rise*), you will place the Charter in the center of the floor, and then escort the Chaplain to the center of the floor, next to the Charter. (*Chaplain facing Noble Grand.*)

**Warden:** Noble Grand, your order have been obeyed.

**Noble Grand:** Let us unite with the Chaplain in Prayer. (*Noble Grand calls up the Lodge.*)

**Chaplain:** Our Heavenly Father, we come into thy presence to thank thee for the wonderful assurance, which you have given us, that through belief, though dead, yet shall we live; and whosoever believeth, shall never die, and while on Earth through our belief we live with thee and when death doth come, we enjoy eternity with thee.

We would ask that thou always aid and support our humble efforts to learn and practice the lessons of **friendship, love and truth**. And when we also will lay aside our mortal bodies, that we shall be accepted into thy kingdom. This we would ask in thy Holy Name. AMEN.

**Noble Grand:** Warden and Conductor, you will remove the drape. This concludes the Ceremony of Undrapping the Charter in Memory of Brother/Sister \_\_\_\_\_.

Warden and Conductor, escort the chaplain to her station, and then place the Charter in its proper position.

(*Noble Grand seats the Lodge.*)

# INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

## Valediction

### I am an Odd Fellow

I believe in the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man;

I believe in Friendship, Love and Truth as basic guides to the ultimate destiny of all mankind;

I believe my home, my church or temple, my lodge, and my community deserve my best work, my modest pride, my earnest faith, and my deepest loyalty, as I perform my duty “to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan” and as I work with others to build a better world because, in spirit and in truth, I am, and must always be, grateful to my Creator, faithful to my Country and fraternal to my fellow-man;

### I am an Odd Fellow!

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### Our Motto

“Friendship, Love and Truth”

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### Our Object

To Improve and Elevate the Character of Man.

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### Our Creed

Genuine **FRIENDSHIP**, which heareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, is the first step toward progress and personal enrichment, and the – progenitor of Temperance, Prudence and Justice;

Unfettered **LOVE** is the basis for all life’s ambitions—the controlling passion of service to humanity—more powerful than the atom—more potent than any finite force;

Inflexible **TRUTH**, the imperial virtue, begets economic stability, equality under law, freedom of enterprise, the highest of ethical standards, and lasting peace, the ultimate goal of fraternity;

Universal **BROTHERHOOD OF MAN** under the **FATHERHOOD OF GOD** is imperative to the survival of the world, and can be accomplished only through the catalysis of fellowship– inculcating the cohesion which stems from understanding and amity among peoples, states and nations.